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May 7, 2024

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Members

FROM: Maureen Hess and Mark Fritsch

SUBJECT: Update on Project Review

BACKGROUND:

Presenter: Council Staff

Summary: Staff will provide a brief overview of the next project review process and updates on accomplishments since our last update in October 2023. This will include a summary of our finalized project mapping effort to categorize projects based on the type of work implemented, which is important for structuring and scheduling the next project review cycle. Staff will also outline the general components, schedule, and rationale for initiating the review cycle with a subset of 38 projects focused on mitigation lands benefiting fish and wildlife.

Relevance: The revised approach to the next review process recognizes the numerous past reviews, the maturity of the direct-funded projects implemented through the Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program (Program), and the complexity and current dynamics of how projects are implemented, while continuing to meet science review requirements as directed by Section 4(h)(10)(D) of the Northwest Power Act.

Workplan: Fish and Wildlife Division work plan 2024; Program Implementation, Project Review (ongoing projects).

Background:

Project Review

For over 25 years, the Council has developed and conducted reviews of projects directly funded by Bonneville that are implemented to mitigate, protect and enhance fish and wildlife as directed under the Northwest Power Act. These rigorous reviews have resulted in clear documentation of each project's purpose, objectives, and results; project improvements through independent scientific review and feedback; facilitation of sharing project data and information; increased transparency and accountability; and the identification of project contributions to the Program and to the region.

The projects implementing the Council's mitigation Program have grown in numbers and complexity through the years. In addition, they have been reviewed and recommended by the Council numerous times, and their continued implementation and overall scientific soundness has been accepted.

Due to the fact that most projects have been reviewed numerous times, the information requested about the projects has also evolved over time. Early project reviews focused primarily on the proposed project details to ensure the projects were scientifically sound. Contemporary reviews have shifted to focus on project results and the adaptive management of ongoing work.

Project Mapping

Council and Bonneville staff completed a [project mapping](#) effort to develop a shared list of active projects, understand how each project supports the Program, and categorize projects based on the type of work implemented (i.e., what projects are doing). Results of this effort are key to organizing and structuring the next project review cycle.

The mapping effort was applied to Bonneville's Fiscal Year 2024 Start-of-Year budget information to determine the direct Program's current project list ($n = 309$) and confirm each project's alignment to categories identified by the [project mapping effort \(i.e., purpose and emphasis\)](#) that was finalized in April 2024. In addition, this effort allows the ability to group projects into discrete sets and clarify which projects are amenable to science review.

Next Steps

Based on principles retained from previous project reviews over the past 25 years and recognizing each ongoing reviewed and recommended

project's basic premise, the overall scientific soundness and reason for existence of continuing projects in the Program has been accepted, an extensive project review is not needed. Instead, we propose that an implementation check-in is warranted. To ensure this implementation check-in is efficient and value is added, staff previewed the developing approach and received initial input from the fish and wildlife managers through the Regional Coordination Forum (April 2023), the Independent Science Review Panel (June 2023) and Bonneville staff (September 2023) to further develop and refine the new project review process.

Guiding principles for this review are:

- Serve as an implementation check-in on project actions:
 - Review the project's progress in achieving its stated objectives.
 - Use targeted questions or topics for the benefit of the Council and regional policy, management, and coordination efforts.
 - Provide an opportunity to confirm administrative changes (i.e., project title name changes, plans for merging contracts, etc.) and project work elements and objectives.
- Address any outstanding Council recommendations.

The next project review will function as an addendum to past reviews; this redesigned review process is meant to be more efficient to ensure the review provides value for the Council, projects sponsors, and the region, while not creating an excess obligation on project sponsors to provide submission information that has already been provided in past reviews. To do so, the submission package for the next review will be based on the previously reviewed and recommended project proposal for each project. The narrative addendum will also include a brief summary that provides an update since the last review, responses to the targeted questions provided by the Council to guide the review, and relevant supporting documents to assist the reviewers and improve their understanding of current project implementation and any associated issues.

Based on the above and completion of the project mapping effort, Council staff is now prepared to initiate structuring the next project review cycle for ongoing projects and schedule an initial subset of projects to be reviewed using the revised approach.

Over the next few months, staff will confirm the total list of projects to be reviewed in the next cycle and prepare for the review with the subset of projects that are focused on Fish and Wildlife Program Lands (i.e.,

Wildlife¹ and Fish²). This set of projects was selected based on both the time since the last review (2017), and alignment to other Council work. In particular, Council staff are working to identify Strategy Performance Indicators on wildlife lands and to track progress toward achieving Wildlife Program goals. Both tracking efforts would benefit from project sponsor review materials and results.

To prepare for this initial review of Lands projects (Table 1), staff will work to:

- Clarify how each project may participate in the review (i.e., BPA Program Support projects and O&M project elements may not warrant scientific review).
- Develop a review template to include targeted questions to guide projects and the review process.
- Continue to seek additional input and feedback on the project review process with fish and wildlife managers (through the Regional Coordination Forum), Bonneville staff, and the Science panel.

We anticipate sending notice to sponsors in June 2024 to outline the process and timeline for review of the Lands projects, which would include a sponsor workshop to be scheduled to guide sponsors through review materials, instructions, and the submission process.

¹ Those lands purchased and/or enhanced through the Program to benefit wildlife focal species, as mitigation for losses attributable to construction, inundation, and operation of the federal hydrosystem, are termed "Wildlife Lands."

² Those lands purchased and/or enhanced as mitigation through the Program to benefit aquatic focal species are termed "Fish Lands."

Table 1: Projects that are focused on Fish and Wildlife Program Lands (i.e., Wildlife and Fish).

Project Number	Proponent Orgs	Project Title	Detailed Emphasis
1990-092-00	CTUIR	Wanaket Wildlife Area	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
1991-061-00	WDFW	Swanson Lake Wildlife Mitigation	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
1992-048-00	CCT	Hellsgate Big Game Winter Range	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
1992-061-02	KT	Albeni Falls Wildlife Mitigation-Kalispel Tribe	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
1992-061-03	IDFG	Albeni Falls Wildlife Mitigation-Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG)	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
1992-061-05	KTOI	Albeni Falls Wildlife Mitigation-Kootenai Tribe	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
1992-061-06	CDT	Albeni Falls Wildlife Mitigation-Coeur D'Alene Tribe	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
1994-044-00	WDFW	Sagebrush Flat Wildlife Mitigation	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
1995-057-00	IDFG	Southern Idaho Wildlife Mitigation	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
1995-057-02	SBT	Shoshone-Bannock Wildlife Mitigation Projects	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
1995-057-03	SPT	Southern Idaho Wildlife Mitigation--Shoshone-Paiute Tribes	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
1995-060-01	CTUIR	IsqÃ°ulktpe Watershed Project	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
1996-080-00	NPT	Northeast Oregon Wildlife Project	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E

1996-094-01	WDFW	Scotch Creek Wildlife Mitigation	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
1998-003-00	STOI	Wildlife Mitigation/Operations and Maintenance (O&M) for Spokane Tribe Land Acquisitions	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
1998-022-00	CTWSO	Pine Creek Conservation Area	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
2000-009-00	BPT	Logan Valley Wildlife Mitigation	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
2000-015-00	CTWSO	Upper John Day Conservation Lands Program	Restoration/Protection - Fish Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
2000-026-00	CTUIR	Rainwater Wildlife Area Operations	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
2000-027-00	BPT	Malheur River Wildlife Mitigation	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
2002-003-00	CSKT	Secure and Restore Fish and Wildlife Habitat in Montana	Restoration/Protection - Fish Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
2002-014-00	WDFW	Sunnyside Wildlife Mitigation	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
2003-012-00	WDFW	Shillapoo Wildlife Mitigation	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
2006-003-00	WDFW	Desert Wildlife Mitigation	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
2006-004-00	WDFW	Wenas Wildlife Mitigation	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
2006-005-00	WDFW	Asotin Creek Wildlife Mitigation	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
2008-007-00	UCUT	Upper Columbia United Tribes (UCUT) Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Program	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
2008-102-00	CCT	Upper Columbia Land Operation and Maintenance	Restoration/Protection - Fish Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
2008-104-00	CCT	Upper Columbia Land & Water Acquisition	Restoration/Protection - Fish Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
2011-003-00	ODFW	Willamette Wildlife Fund (WWF)	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
2011-018-00	KT	Pend Oreille River Basin Initiative: Land Acquisitions, Watershed Restoration, Conservation Hatchery	Restoration/Protection - Fish Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E

BPA Program Support (Lands category of projects)			
1992-061-00	IIDFG, CDT, KT and KTOI	Albeni Falls Wildlife Mitigation Capital Land Acquisitions	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
2008-303-00	CTWSO	Columbia and Willamette Rivers Operations Administration	Restoration/Protection - Wildlife Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
2008-800-00	MFWP	Montana Resident Fish Habitat Acquisition	Restoration/Protection - Fish Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
2010-088-00	OSC	Upper and Lower Lemhi Acquisition/Easements	Restoration/Protection - Fish Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
2011-004-00	ODFW	ODFW Operation & Maintenance (O&M)	Restoration/Protection - Fish Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
2013-002-00	BPA	Land Acquisition Monitoring	Restoration/Protection - Fish Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E
2018-001-00	BPA	BPA Pre-Acquisition	Restoration/Protection - Fish Lands Acquisition, O&M, RM&E